

BROOKS SCHANDELMEIER

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Candidate Biography

Appointed to the Annapolis City Council in October 2020, I have been a longtime community activist in Annapolis, coming before the General Assembly, County Council, and City Council to fight for progressive change. I am running for reelection in 2021 because I want to continue to work towards housing equality, address the digital divide, and protect the city's environment. I am dedicated to making our city a place we can all be lucky enough to call home.

Access to Affordable Housing: Annapolis cannot sustain itself if we continue to squeeze out middle and lower income residents from the city. Before becoming an Alderman, I lobbied the Anne Arundel County Council to permit workforce housing and to strengthen housing discrimination laws. On the City Council, I am working to address affordable housing issues. I sponsored a bill to allow accessory dwelling units in the City and cosponsored legislation to enforce moderately priced dwelling unit mandates with developers. I work with the Annapolis Affordable Housing Task Force to continue steps that will bring affordable housing to Annapolis.

Addressing the Digital Divide: When Anne Arundel County transitioned to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, many Annapolis students were not able to connect to their classes because they did not have internet access at home. CARES Act funds helped low-income students access the internet but this is not a permanent fix. Annapolis needs its own municipal broadband network. Society is increasingly moving business, commerce, and education online. Telecommunications monopolies hinder this with high costs and low quality, creating a digital divide for low-income families that lack access to online resources for business or education. Municipal broadband offers faster speeds at lower costs. I am working with Federal and State partners to secure funding for this important infrastructure investment.

Helping Small Businesses: Our businesses and their employees were harmed by the COVID-19 pandemic. I know this firsthand, having worked as a bartender when the first cases of COVID were reported in Maryland last March. Like many in our town, I was laid off to help flatten the curve, sacrificing income for the good of the community. This spirit of working together is why I am working to help the small businesses of Ward 5. I delivered protective equipment to local business owners, to keep their employees safe without cutting into their revenue. I helped local restaurants connect to city resources to advertise for their businesses. I brought together representatives from Visit Annapolis and local business associations to advertise for the holiday season. As the chair of the Economic Matters Committee, I am dedicated to keeping Annapolis a great place to work and own a business.

Justice: We need to shift how we view policing. Having police occupy our neighborhoods into pacification and focusing exclusively on punishing crime is not working. We need to make sure our communities have the resources to prevent crime. I defeated a bill to bring controversial "predictive policing" to Annapolis, and want to focus on bringing resources to practice community policing. We need to use community ambassadors to mediate potential conflicts before they become violent. I am an advocate for Annapolis continuing to fund these positions.